

Message Text

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STADIS//////////

FOR EUR/ARMITAGE AND EUR/CE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SOPN, XH, UR, GW
SUBJECT: FRG CHANCELLOR REPORTEDLY CRITICIZES US
DECISION TO STRENGTHEN RFE/RL

1. THE ROME CORRESPONDENT OF RFE/RL FILED STORY MAY 9 WHICH REPORTED THAT FRG CHANCELLOR HELMUT SCHMIDT HAD CRITICIZED U.S. DECISION TO INCREASE STRENGTH OF RFE/RL SIGNAL IN INFORMAL INTERVIEW WITH SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT OF TURIN DAILY NEWSPAPER "STAMPA SERA." FULL TEXT OF RFE/RL CORRESPONDENT'S STORY IS CARRIED IN PARA 2 OF THIS MESSAGE.

2. BEGIN TEXT: ROME, MAY 9 (SPECIAL/ROBERTIELLO) -
THE INDEPENDENT TURIN DAILY STAMPA SERA TODAY QUOTED WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR HELMUT SCHMIDT AS CRITICIZING THE AMERICAN DECISION TO STRENGTHEN "THE PROPAGANDA CENTERS OF RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY."

IN A DISPATCH FROM ITS TURNI-BASED SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CARLO SARTORI, WRITING FROM LONDON, STAMPA SERA SAID SCHMIDT EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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STRENGTHENING OF RFE/RL COULD LEAD THE EAST TO INTENSIFY JAMMING OF OTHER WESTERN BROADCASTERS.

THE 700-WORD DISPATCH, PRINTED ACROSS SIX COLUMNS AT THE BOTTOM OF PAGE ONE AND HEADED "THE RIGHTS OF MAN DIVIDE BONN AND THE WHITE HOUSE," SAID SARTORI "MET WITH THE GERMAN CHANCELLOR TWO WEEKS AGO IN ENGLAND DURING AN

INTERNATIONAL MEETING."

STAMPA SERA INDIRECTLY QUOTED SCHMIDT AS SAYING PRESIDENT CARTER FAILED TO CONSULT EUROPE, INCLUDING THE GERMANS, BEFORE LAUNCHING HIS CAMPAIGN IN FAVOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION. QUOTING SCHMIDT DIRECTLY, STAMPA SERA ADDED:

" '(THIS IS) A CAMPAIGN,' SCHMIDT SAID, 'THAT RISKS COMPROMISING ALL THE SMALL STEPS, CARRIED OUT WITH MONK-LIKE PATIENCE, IN THE DIFFICULT RELATIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST FROM THE HELSINKI ACCORDS TO TODAY.' "

SAYING THAT OTHER ASPECTS OF CURRENT AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY "WORRY" SCHMIDT, STAMPA SERA CONTINUED WITH A DIRECT QUOTE FROM THE WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR:

" WHY WAS IT DECIDED TO STRENGTHEN THE PROPAGANDA CENTERS OF RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY? THE SOVIETS AND EAST GERMANS ARE VERY SENSITIVE IN THIS FIELD. THEY COULD AT A CERTAIN POINT REACT IN A LIVELY FASHION TO THIS INCREASED "INVASION." ' "

ASKED WHAT FORM THIS REACTION MIGHT TAKE, SCHMIDT WAS QUOTED AS SAYING:

" BY OBSCURING, FOR EXAMPLE, THE RADIO AND TELEVISION PROGRAMS THAT, FOR REASONS OF PROXIMITY, MANY PEOPLES OF THE EAST RECEIVE FROM THE WEST, AND THAT, CONFIDENTIAL

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I BELIEVE, ARE MUCH MORE IMPORTANT FOR THE FREE CIRCULATION OF IDEAS. SUFFICE IT TO THINK, IN THIS REGARD, THAT EVERY EVENING ABOUT 11 MILLION EAST GERMANS FOLLOW OUR TV. ALL THIS COULD BE IMPEDED. ' "

STAMPA SERA'S DISPATCH SAID THAT "AT THIS 'INFORMAL' INTERVIEW WAS PRESENT IN AN EQUALLY INFORMAL CAPACITY" A CARTER ADVISER NAMED DAVID AARON. THE DISPATCH MADE NO REPEAT NO FURTHER REFERENCE TO RFE/RL. END TEXT.

3. RFE AND RL HAVE NOT REPEAT NOT BROADCAST ABOVE STORY IN ANY MANNER. TO KNOWLEDGE OF RFE/RL NEWSROOM, NEITHER FRG NOR OTHER WESTERN PRDSS HAS PICKED UP STORY.

4. RFE/RL REPORTER IN ROME IS EXPERIENCED AND RELIABLE JOURNALIST. CONGEN ASSUMES, THEREFORE, THAT HIS ACCOUNT OF "STAMPA SERA" STORY IN ACCURATE.BETTS

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